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Fifth-grader O'Neal earns scholarship money

By Carol Anders Staff Writer

PLYMOUTH — During a school assembly on Tuesday, Riverside Intermediate Principal Donna Burroughs gave some sound advice to the student body.

Burroughs said, "Always try to do the right thing — you never know when's someone is watching."

Fifth-grade student Katelyn O'Neal had already shown that she followed the spirit of that advice. Her compassion for others led Burroughs to nominate her for a state Future Leader Award.

Indiana State Treasurer Richard Mourdock was on hand to present O'Neal with a \$1,000 College Choice 529 (scholarship) account. The money will be held in an investment account for O'Neal to be used towards college expenses.

Murdock told the student body that he is responsible for the investment of \$8 billion for the state. He then challenged all of the students to be willing to study in school and tell their parents about the College Choice Plan.

Burroughs said O'Neal demonstrated compassion and leadership by setting up a lemonade stand to raise money for another student and his family that lost their home in a fire. Burroughs said when O'Neal didn't reach her goal of obtaining a \$50 donation, she went door to door to collect money for the family. "Katelyn is a positive influence on her peers," Burroughs said. "Her compassionate nature and optimistic attitude make her an outstanding young student leader."

Riverside Intermediate will also receive \$250 to be used to foster its own leadership activities, according

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to Mourdock.

True to her unassuming nature, O'Neal seemed totally surprised that she was the recipient even after she saw her parents, grandparents and other family members in the audience.

Katelyn is the daughter of Dave and Kasi O'Neal.

"We're very proud of her. She did this all on her own," said Kasi O'Neal.

More information on the College Choice 529 plan is available at www.collegechoiceplan.com or by calling 866-400-PLAN.

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